

the politicians who always do their bidding passed their tax cut for the wealthy and corporations that outsource jobs. You know what they promised? They promised it would all trickle down and have more jobs and workers in Savannah—the hometown of the Senator from Georgia—that there will be more jobs and the workers would get more pay and the companies would invest more in the workforce.

Well, it didn't exactly happen that way. They kept their money for themselves. They spent that money on stock buybacks. Unsurprisingly, where did that money go? It goes in the pockets, mostly, of executives.

Now, this year, without a single vote from Republicans in Congress, we passed tax cuts for everyone else. It is a pretty simple contrast.

Whose side are you on? Do you want tax cuts for billionaires and corporations—that is what they did 4 years ago; that is what the President and the Congress did 4 years ago—or do you want tax cuts for working families? That is what Senator WARNOCK's and Senator OSSOFF's and President Biden's elections meant in November and January of this year; that instead of more tax cuts for the richest people in the country—though that bill, 70 percent of the tax cuts or the benefits went to the richest 1 percent—now we are seeing our tax cut goes to 90 percent of the families in this country.

Every single month we are showing parents and workers we are on your side. We will not stop fighting to make sure parents' hard work pays off for years to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I first want to say thank you to Senators BROWN, BENNET, and BOOKER for keeping a spotlight on this issue. I must admit, however, on this issue, when I say Senators BROWN, BENNET, and BOOKER, I think about the multiple choice questionnaires we got in school, and I am wondering how a guy with a last name "Warnock" got to be a part of this effort, but I am grateful.

I want to get right to the point. There are many reasons to move this Build Back Better American package forward. We have to build back better. We have a historic opportunity to make landmark investments that will strengthen our families, our economy, our care infrastructure, including expanding Medicaid benefits to more than 4 million Americans. We have got 600,000 Georgians in the Medicaid gap. We have got to provide critical debt relief for small farmers who have taken a financial hit during the pandemic. All of these things are covered in this Build Back Better agenda.

But the other top priority of mine, and why we are all here today, is that we have a chance to extend the expanded child tax credit. We have already seen it making a difference in the lives of over 2.2 million children just in Georgia alone.

I want to be clear about who this tax cut helps because people who have no vision engage in division, and sometimes when we are discussing these policies, we need to slow down and make sure folk know exactly whom we are talking about.

Ninety-seven percent—97 percent—of American families with children would benefit from this tax cut. After we passed the American Rescue Plan, we significantly expanded the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit.

To put more money in the pockets of working families, I remember that Senator BOOKER—actually, Senator BENNET called me from his car. He was on his way back home. I had just gotten elected, and just a few short months after I got elected, we passed the American Rescue Plan because we won the majority and were able to do this. Senator BROWN said to me: RAPHAEL, this is one of the best days of my career because we were able to pass the American Rescue Plan with all of these amazing provisions, and this provision alone is transformational. Experts have said that this investment that we made earlier this year would cut child poverty in half nationwide. Think about that. One provision. Just giving ordinary people, hard-working families, a break cuts child poverty in half. This is good public policy.

But I will tell you what would be bad public policy. It is bad public policy to cut child poverty in half one year and then go back the very next year and double child poverty. That is poor public policy. It is not right, and it is not smart.

The expanded child tax credit is helping Georgians. And do you want to know how I know that? I know because, as I am moving across the State, they are telling me. And it is no surprise, when you put an extra \$200 or \$300 in the bank account of ordinary people, working people, it makes a huge difference.

In my regular travels around the State, Georgians have told me how this tax cut for working families has made a difference in their lives, made their lives just a little bit easier, especially at the start of a new school year.

A few weeks ago, I was down in Columbus, GA, and I met with some of the hard-working families who receive this tax cut. And as I stand here, I think about Dante and Alicia, a couple I met down in Columbus, GA. Their daughter's name is London. And I asked them: What are you going to do with this monthly payment?

And they said it will help cover the costs of school clothes and brain-building extracurricular activities. They have a very active young daughter, very bright, London. She came to the meeting. And they said that: We wouldn't be able to afford these extracurricular activities, but this extra support, just this little lift, has made a difference in our personal economy, and it has made a difference for London.

I talked to Will, who works as a local hairdresser, and the monthly payment helps his 12-year-old daughter participate in karate tournaments, a development opportunity that family would not otherwise be able to afford.

In another conversation, I asked a Georgia mom of two young, growing boys: Where would this tax cut go?

I said: What are you going to do with this tax cut?

Do you know what she said to me?

She said: I am going to buy food and shoes.

You know, when you give ordinary folk a break, when you give them an extra \$200 or \$300 a month, you know, they go and buy extravagant things, like food and shoes and a coat for their kid.

They invest in extracurricular activities because they want to see their children do a little bit better than they did. And when they invest in their children, in a real sense, they invest in all of our children.

When you give folk who already have everything they need and then some, you give them that money, they hold on to that money. But when you give money to ordinary folks, they put that money right back into our local economies and into our small businesses.

Often the right thing to do is also the smart thing to do. It creates jobs, helps all of us. And so the expanded child tax credit grows and bolsters our economy from the bottom up.

I agree with Senator BROWN. I am just old enough to remember when folks were talking about trickle-down economics. And as a pastor, I have worked and conducted my ministry in these communities that have been hearing folks talk about trickle down for the last 40 years. The way to grow an economy is from the bottom up. The right thing to do is the smart thing to do.

The expanded child tax credit is changing lives right now, and we have a chance in this economic package we are working on to secure this investment for working Georgians and Americans into the future, and that is why I believe we should make it permanent, and I will keep advocating for that. But extending this critical tax cut right now is the right thing to do for working families. We ought to do it. We ought not just talk about it; we ought to do it.

The Scripture says, He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require . . . but that you do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.

I see the face of God in the faces of our children.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). The Senator from Texas.

VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, in June, our Democratic colleagues voted on their first and initial efforts to nationalize our State-run and local-run election system. That bill—this legislation, this effort—had been years in the

making. You know, in some ways, it is interesting to think about because back when our country was founded, there was a big debate on whether we should have a national government or whether we should have a Federal system. And, of course, we opted for a Federal system where the States retained their sovereignty within their authority, and all powers not delegated to the Federal Government were retained by the States and the people. That is the very definition of a Federal system.

So our colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle have sort of renewed that debate again, trying to upend our Federal system of governance in favor of a national government, basically a command and control run out of Washington, DC.

When it comes to the takeover of our elections or to try to nationalize our elections, the initial proposal surfaced as a messaging bill in 2019 but over the years has undergone a number of makeovers. Each time, our colleagues have tried to sell this radical change in the way that our elections are run by different appeals.

They have talked about, well, this is important for election security. Remember the 2016 election, obviously—big concerns about Russian misinformation campaigns and cyber attacks, and election security was obviously at top of mind.

Then it was sold as a matter of regaining the voters' confidence that their vote would actually count.

Then it was sold as a way to remove the obstacles that prevented people from voting, which appears to be the current message.

Well, in 2020, in my State alone, but not just in Texas but across the country, we saw a record voter turnout. In my State, we said 66 percent of registered voters cast a ballot—11.3 million people.

The last time I had been on the ballot, 6 years previously, we only had 4.8 million voters, but we went from 4.8 to 11.3 in just 6 years. Now, part of that is because my State has been growing. Between 2010 and 2020, we have seen 4 million new Texans, either born or moved or made their way one way or another to our State.

But the 2020 election saw the largest voter turnout in 120 years—120 years. Well, clearly, if people are voting—including people of color, minorities—are voting at record levels, it is time to come up with a new sales pitch to try to sell this hijacking, really, of our State- and local-run elections.

So a number of States, including my State, have recently passed legislation to address voter confidence, to make sure that elections are fair and that people have an opportunity to vote who are legally qualified to do so. The phrase many of them used in that process was, they tried to make it easier to vote and harder to cheat. So that now has been the focus of our Democratic colleagues in trying to nationalize our

State- and local-run elections, which, by the way, is ensconced within the framework of the Constitution itself.

So our Democratic colleagues then attacked the State election laws and really just went over the top in terms of their description of what exactly was happening. Certainly it was not factual, but they said, in a number of cases, these changes in State election laws—and I am thinking of Georgia, Arizona, and Texas in particular—they said that they are the most sweeping attacks on the right to vote since the beginning of Jim Crow, and they said the only way to change that was to pass their election law.

Our colleagues talked about the bill in terms of protecting the right to vote and strengthening our democracy. Who could be against that? But the reality of the situation is very different, and the far-reaching provisions of the Democratic election takeover bill look nothing like the safeguards of democracy; they look more like a partisan power play.

In the end, the only thing bipartisan about the bill was the opposition. In both the House and Senate, Republicans and Democrats voted against the initial legislation, but our Democratic colleagues still refuse to recognize the reality of the vote and throw in the towel.

After the failed vote this summer, our colleagues on the Democratic side went back to the drawing board and came back with a new bill they call the Freedom to Vote Act. Well, if we needed any more proof that this is not a good-faith effort to strengthen our election but, rather, a partisan power play, the bill was introduced 1 week ago, and the Senate could end up voting on it as early as this week. That is hardly what I would call a deliberative process, one that even invites bipartisan debate and consideration.

So we may end up being required to vote on the bill—that is certainly the prerogative of the majority leader—with no real committee hearings, no real testimony from experts, and no indication that this bill is really being taken seriously other than to check a box and to send a message.

What has really been interesting is our colleagues on the left have said—they have tried to brand this as a compromise bill. I think that is primarily because of the objection of the Senator from West Virginia, Senator MANCHIN, who said he couldn't support the original bill. So they tried to come up with something that maybe looked more like a compromise but really isn't, and I will talk about that more in a second.

But this bill was not the result of bipartisan deliberations or consultation or communication even. As the Republican leader has noted, this so-called compromise bill is a compromise between the left and the radical left, which is hardly a compromise at all. But that is apparently the way that Leader SCHUMER decides to run the Senate, after all, passing a \$1.9 trillion

spending bill right after Joe Biden became President, with no Republican support, under the auspices of being COVID relief when only 10 percent of it actually had anything to do with COVID.

Well, the good news is we have done a few bipartisan things. We passed the Endless Frontier Act—our way of trying to address the challenge of China. We passed a bipartisan infrastructure bill. But now our colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to do it alone again, and they are trying to pass a bill that could end up costing taxpayers as much as \$5.5 trillion. A nominal figure is \$3.5 trillion, but right now, they are experiencing a lot of differences of opinion within their own ranks as to what is acceptable and what is not, and they certainly aren't talking to us.

But all the while, they have continued to work on a partisan effort to overrun our constitutional delegation, really, of the election system to State and local government. So no one should be fooled. This bill is not a compromise in any sense of the word. Just like its predecessor, this bill hijacks State constitutional power to make decisions on things like voter registration and early voting.

Actually, this morning in the Constitution Subcommittee, the Senator from Connecticut, Senator BLUMENTHAL, was talking about the fact that his State, Connecticut, did not have early in-person voting, but they have now passed a bill that provides for a referendum in Connecticut. If the referendum passes, then the State legislature may actually provide for early voting in person.

I would just tell you that the contrast between the rhetoric and the reality is pretty amazing because the Texas election law, passed by the State legislature just recently, provides for 17 days of early voting in person. In other words, there is a fulsome opportunity for anybody who is qualified to vote to cast their ballot in person or by mail if you qualify or on the day of the election. As you can see, with 66 percent of the registered voters actually taking advantage of that generous opportunity to cast their ballot, they did in historic numbers.

Well, there is a saying that “if it is not broke, don't fix it,” and there is nothing broke about our State- and local-run election systems. Certainly the guardrails are in place. If, for example, someone were to deny a minority voter the opportunity to cast a ballot or to make sure their ballot counted just like anybody else's, there is section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. In fact, the Biden Department of Justice has filed such a lawsuit against Georgia based on the changes in their voting laws. So there is plenty of opportunity to raise these issues in court should the Federal Government and should the Biden administration wish to challenge them, but the truth is, they are going to lose because what they have

tried to do is to change through litigation what they cannot do constitutionally through legislation.

Well, this so-called compromise bill, which is no compromise at all, contains invasive disclosure requirements that would attack the privacy of voters and chill free speech. It places handcuffs on States when it comes to drawing new legislative lines in redistributing, and it threatens action from the Attorney General if those standards aren't met. It makes it too difficult to root out fraud and protect the integrity of the vote by prohibiting voter ID for mail-in ballots and mandating drop boxes for ballots to be dropped by partisan advocates.

You know, people act like there is no such thing as voter fraud, but actually we have a famous case in Texas called Box 13 in Duval County, TX, where Coke Stevenson and LBJ—Lyndon Baines Johnson—were running for the Senate.

You know what they found is, because of the manipulation of the voter rolls by the county judge in Duval County, literally, they had people who were already buried in the cemetery vote in favor of Lyndon Baines Johnson in alphabetical order once they figured out how many votes they needed to cast.

That is just one famous example of voter fraud. Our Democratic colleagues act like it doesn't exist.

But what we did here in the Judiciary Committee a few months ago was the secretary of state for New Hampshire—he is a Democrat, and they don't have any early voting. It was interesting to hear him say that he thinks the single most important factor when it comes to people casting their ballot is people's confidence in the system that their ballot will actually be counted the way they voted. So all of these different times and conditions under which people can cast their ballot, he says, really don't have nearly as big an impact as just the confidence they have that their vote will be counted as they cast it.

And why our Democratic colleagues are opposed to voter ID is beyond me. We know Jimmy Carter and James Baker III—of course, Jimmy Carter, a former Democratic President; and James Baker III, a former prominent Secretary of State and Treasury Secretary. They had a commission to look at things like voter ID, and they actually recommended that voter ID would be one way to instill public confidence in the integrity of the vote.

You have to show your ID when you go through the Transportation Security Administration—TSA—to get on an airplane. You have to show an ID if you are going to buy a pack of cigarettes at a convenience store or six-pack of beer. I mean, we are accustomed to people being required to identify who they are. If you want to get into a Federal building, you have to show an ID.

So the idea that we should prohibit voter ID, to me, is ridiculous, and that

is one of the provisions in the Democrat substitute bill which is before us. It would prohibit the use of voter ID through mail-in ballots.

But that is just the beginning. One of the most outlandish—or I should say on top of what I have already talked about—provisions of this bill is the use of taxpayer funds for campaigns. Well, a lot of companies have matching programs for charitable giving. That is a positive, good thing. If an employee donates to a charity of their choice, many times their company will match that donation dollar for dollar. That is a positive thing.

But, here, what happens is, instead of a charity getting the money, it is a political candidate. In other words, our Democratic colleagues are recommending that for every dollar that is donated to a political candidate, the taxpayer kick in an extra 6 bucks.

Well, I know some of these campaigns that we have already run in recently get to be pretty expensive campaigns. But can you imagine that the taxpayers be asked to pony up \$6 for every \$1 that is contributed to the campaign? And is it really fair to ask taxpayers to subsidize the election of somebody they may disagree with?

It makes no sense to me. Well, this means that if someone donates \$200 to the preferred congressional candidate, the Federal Government could match with \$1,200. And it is not the Federal Government; it is the taxpayer, by the way.

Then there are the campaign vouchers, which will provide eligible voters with a \$25 voucher to donate to the campaign of their choosing. I am not making this up. This is what is in the legislation that, unfortunately, I don't think many people have read or understand.

It is easy to imagine a better use of taxpayer funding, whether infrastructure, help for people who still are in need as a result of the COVID pandemic. It could go to crime victims or support a response to a humanitarian crisis at the border, like we are seeing in Del Rio, TX. But, no, our Democratic colleagues want to put it into the political campaigns of the candidates of their choice.

Well, in addition to the rotten provisions that are maintained from the previous bill, there is even more. The bill places immense power in the office of General Counsel of the Federal Election Commission. He is an unelected official. It lowers the legal standard to overturn voting laws. And it makes election day a Federal holiday, even though the bill mandates 15 days of early voting, which, again, by the way, is less than the State legislature has provided for in Texas. We have 17 days of early voting.

Well, the truth is this is a so-called solution in search of a problem. The truth is there is no voter suppression epidemic.

During the Obama administration, their Justice Department brought four

lawsuits—four lawsuits—under section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. If you thought there was an epidemic of voter suppression, don't you think the Obama administration would have been more active and more vigilant?

Again, there is the fact that the 2020 elections saw the highest turnout in 120 years for all racial and ethnic groups. Over the last 4 years, States across the country undertook efforts to keep their elections free from fraud and foreign interference.

By the way, one of the conclusions following the 2016 election by the intelligence community was that the dispersed and diffused nature of our elections actually made it harder for Russia to impact the outcome because they would have had to do so in all 50 States.

If this was all run out of Washington, DC, and one black box appeared, it would probably be easier for them to concentrate their efforts on one location rather than 50 locations and increase the likelihood of their ability to influence the outcome.

Well, we have kicked in—here in Congress—hundreds of millions of dollars to help the States keep their elections free from fraud and foreign interference.

But under the Constitution, as currently written, each State has a constitutional authority to govern how their elections are run, and I think it is a good thing—subject to section 2 of the Voting Rights Act if someone commits a foul.

In my State, 29 million people are spread out across major cities and small towns alike. And what works well in our State may not make as much sense in a small, densely populated State like New Jersey, or large, sparsely populated State like Alaska.

That is why it is important that the States be the laboratories of democracy and try to be responsive to the needs of the people in their particular State, because we are not all the same. I believe the leaders in each State know best the unique circumstances of their constituents, and they are best suited to craft voting laws that prioritize both access and security.

A Federal Government hijacking of our State- and local-run election laws will not improve voter confidence in our elections. In fact, it will stir the very fears that Democrats claim they are trying to alleviate. But this isn't really new. It is just a repackaged and new effort to do the same thing, which is to nationalize our elections and run all of them out of Washington, DC, and to discourage commonsense measures, like voter ID, that help bolster public confidence in our elections and diminish the opportunity for people to cheat.

Well, no matter how many times we see this rebranded and new version of this Federal takeover of elections, I will continue to fight any effort to take the constitutional authority given to my State to run our own elections. I certainly am not going to turn

it over to the National Democratic Party.

The Senate will never green light politically motivated attempts to take over America's elections, and that is good thing. And we are not going to go down this road on this new, rehashed, modified, substitute effort to nationalize our Federal elections.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

#### CLIMATE LEGISLATION

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, for more than 100 years, scientists have shown that burning fossil fuels creates carbon pollution that heats up and builds up in our atmosphere. It just doesn't go away. It just keeps building up more and more and more.

And for more than 100 years, we kept on burning fossil fuels anyway. In fact, we have given major—as a Congress—major, permanent tax benefits for the past 100 years to the fossil fuel industry. Now we are experiencing the full force and the huge cost of that choice, and it is growing even faster than many predicted.

This week, I published a report that outlined how extreme weather events are becoming more destructive, more dangerous, and more expensive, thanks to the climate crisis.

Last year, the U.S. Senate set an awful record. We had 22 separate billion-dollar weather and climate disasters in one year—the most ever. In total, these 22 disasters cost the Nation almost \$100 billion in damages, and 262 Americans lost their lives in severe storms and heat waves and wildfires.

2020 may have set a record, but, unfortunately, it is a record that is going to be broken probably this year. Over the past 5 years, American taxpayers have spent an average of \$126 billion a year in damages due to these disasters. And the total cost of these disasters over the last 15 years tops \$1 trillion, and growing every single day, every single year.

We are debating right now a budget—a Build Back Better Budget—and it involves investing in a number of important things over 10 years at about \$350 billion a year, and we are going to spend that very soon just on climate damage if we don't get ahead of this.

I know the Presiding Officer is leading on this in a very important way, which I thank you, for the issue around clean electricity policies. We have a lot of work to do. Nobody is going untouched. No State is untouched—from Montana to Mississippi, to Massachusetts, to Michigan.

Last week, President Biden was in Idaho surveying the terrible damage caused by wildfires. He said: "We can't continue to ignore reality."

He is right. The reality is carbon pollution is the root cause of the climate crisis. Pollution goes into the atmosphere. It doesn't leave. It just gathers there more and more and more and more, and we are seeing what is happening as a result of that.

If we don't combat the climate crisis now, the destruction and the deaths will continue to go up and up and up. If you think taking action is expensive, consider the cost of inaction.

Who pays the bill?

Well, we all do. We all pay the bill.

Then there is the personal cost. I am thinking of a landowner who lives on the same wooded acres his grandfather owned—or at least he did until a drought-fueled wildfire destroyed his home and the forest that surrounded it.

I am thinking of the small business that lost its roof and all of its inventory when a hurricane and the resulting storm surge hit a small beachside community.

I am thinking of all the Michigan growers I know who are one early freeze or dry season away from being unable to keep the family farm going, and I am thinking of those 262 families who lost someone they loved and will never be the same.

We owe it to those families to take action so that the climate crisis doesn't continue to cost people their lives and their livelihoods, and we owe it to American taxpayers to do all we can to avoid the worst impacts of this crisis.

We know what we need to do. We know what we need to do. We need to cut carbon pollution. That is what we need to do. There are big interests on the other side—oil and gas and coal interests. There is a lot of money—big special interests that keep trying to tell us this isn't real. You know, what you are seeing right in front of your face, what you are experiencing in your life, isn't real; it is pretend; it is not really happening. They put a lot of money into trying to stop what we are doing, but we have to take action. We have to take action. We know this is about carbon pollution; it is also about methane pollution and other greenhouse gases.

We can start doing something about it by passing the Build Back Better budget that the President has proposed. The Build Back Better budget will make electric vehicles more affordable and ensure that they are built right here in the United States. I want them built in Michigan, but at a minimum, we want them built in the United States. That is really important because we know that the transportation sector is the single largest source of carbon pollution that is driving climate change. Electric vehicles are a major part of the solution but not the only one, but they are a major part of it.

The question is not whether they will be built; it is where they will be built—whether they are going to be built in China, where they are spending over \$100 billion right now to capture the entire market, including electric batteries as well as the vehicles, or whether we are going to make it in America.

My goal is to make these vehicles in America. I have often said that Michigan workers are the best in the world.

I believe that. Under the Build Back Better budget, they will lead this world. American workers will lead the world if we are smart about doing what we need to do to invest in America.

The Build Back Better budget also provides clean energy tax incentives, and it funds clean energy procurement so we can make the electricity we need to power the vehicles without carbon pollution. It helps ensure that the technologies we need to transition to clean energy are built right here in the United States by providing tax credits for manufacturers to retool and build new plants to produce advanced energy parts.

It will hold polluters accountable and make sure they are held responsible for their actions. It will invest in important clean electricity policies. It will invest in climate-smart agriculture so that farmers and ranchers and foresters can continue to be an even bigger part of the solution, and it will restore our forests and make them more resilient to wildfires.

The Build Back Better budget, alongside the bipartisan infrastructure package, which is also very important, will make our infrastructure more resilient and tackle the main driver of the climate crisis: carbon pollution.

Best of all, these investments will also create millions of good-paying American jobs. That is the great part. As we are transitioning in Michigan, we are seeing jobs that are being created as part of the clean energy economy.

It is true that these policies represent significant investments, but it is also true that the cost of inaction is much, much higher. Inaction has consequences—so many different consequences—for us, for our children, for our grandchildren, and we can't afford those consequences. We just can't afford those consequences anymore.

So, on behalf of all of our children, on behalf of our grandchildren, now is the time to act. We must take this moment because we are running out of time. We must take this moment to act to address the pollution that is creating this climate crisis. We can do it—we know what to do—but now is the time to act and get it done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I rise today to call attention to the humanitarian crisis that is happening right now in the State of Texas, another one happening right now in Del Rio, TX—yet another consequence of President Biden's and Vice President HARRIS's dangerous refusal to enforce our laws or to protect our border, a refusal that is causing people to die; that is causing young girls to be trafficked; that is causing drugs to pour into our State; and that is causing our communities to become much less safe.

Right now, thousands of Haitians are camped under a bridge in Del Rio, TX,